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OO RUEHAST RUEHDBU  
DE RUEHDBU #0269 0391227  
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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6662  
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 1396  
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 0298  
RUEHAST/USOFFICE ASTANA 0026  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1398  
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 0522  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/HQ DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
RUEAEPA/HQ EPA WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1336  
RUEHVV/ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1278  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1366  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0244  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1310  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 0527  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY USAID  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 7766

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TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PGOV](#) [TI](#)

SUBJECT: NDI REGISTRATION: YOUR DOG'S TAIL IS CROOKED

REF: A) DUSHANBE

1. (SBU) Tajik folk wisdom has it that even if all your papers are in order, inspectors will find something wrong -- your dog's tail is crooked -- for example. After many promises that re-registration for National Democratic Institute (NDI) personnel was solved, it turns out to be unsolved. DCM spent an hour and a half at the "OVIR" registration office, with many cell phone calls to the MFA, to no avail. OVIR's English equivalent is printed at the entrance. The bronze plaque reads: Department of Viza and Registration of Foreign Citizens," (sic).

2. (SBU) The normally two-minute process dragged on and on as the OVIR Chief Inspector found excuse after excuse for not re-registering NDI Program Director Nurul Rakhimbekov, a CIS citizen who must keep a current registration on file. First, the inspector simply said "no, come back in the afternoon." Then, she needed the NDI landlord's passport. We dispatched a driver and 30 minutes later complied. (We learned later that the landlord has already been summoned to the Prosecutor's Office for questioning.) Then she complained that Rakhimbekov could not be registered as an individual since he works for an NGO. DCM took exception to all of these technicalities and said the Ambassador has an understanding with the Deputy Foreign Minister that Rakhimbekov will be registered as an individual, then local Director Gegham Sargsyan will be registered, also as an individual, and then we can fight about NDI's registration as an NGO.

3. (SBU) Two cell phone calls with the MFA bought us some time, but no decision before lunchtime, when we were escorted out. At that point, the final word was that Rakhimbekov is still legal until February 15, and so he should not re-register until then. Throughout the process we kept many other applicants waiting, and there were groups of other seemingly unoccupied men giving

us malevolent glares.

¶4. (SBU) In the afternoon, DCM again discussed the issue with MFA North American Chief Nasriddinov, who said he would inform the Minister of the latest developments.

¶5. (SBU) At about 4:30 DCM called Nasredinov again. He said the Minister would probably call the Ambassador in on Thursday. First to discuss a security incident in Washington, then to assure the Ambassador, once again, that the NDI issue is "solved." Regarding the security incident, the Tajiks are looking for a diplomatic note from the State Department about how to proceed in a case in which their driver was allegedly assaulted.

¶6. (SBU) COMMENT: The NGO problem is a long way from being solved. In fact, according to the American Councils' Director, the Prosecutor's Office has given the green light to investigators to initiate investigations at any NGO office. The fine line between investigation and harassment is not always recognized in Tajikistan and this signal to lower level officials is likely to be interpreted as open season on NGOs, particularly American NGOs. Even dogs with straight tails are likely in for a rough period.

¶7. (U) Kabul minimize considered.

HOAGLAND